

Tinnitus and hyperacusis

As many as 63 percent of tinnitus patients also suffer from hyperacusis.

Researchers at the ENT unit at the Alarcón Foundation Hospital in Madrid, Spain, found a connection between hyperacusis (a hearing condition of hypersensitivity to external and common sounds) and tinnitus. The study found that most cases of tinnitus and hyperacusis were



associated with hearing loss. In fact 83 percent of the patients were hearing impaired while only 17 percent had normal hearing.

Impact on the quality of life

Study participants made a self-evaluation on the impact of tinnitus and hyperacusis on their quality of life. 54 percent of the patients were upset by environmental noise, and 52 percent reported that they felt unable to conduct at least one daily activity due to their noise intolerance. In addition, almost half of the hyperacusis patients with tinnitus reported some degree of disability.

Other factors: Gender and stress

The researchers found that hyperacusis was 20% more likely to occur among women than among men. Other factors seemed to include anxiety and stress, which affected up to 65 percent of tinnitus patients with hyperacusis. Other phobias were present in 15 percent of the cases.

Hyperacusis patients may receive the same treatment as tinnitus patients to alleviate symptoms, for example, the **Tinnitus Retraining Therapy**. Some experts considered hypersensitivity to external sounds as a possible pre-tinnitus condition.